

**WATER ALLOCATION PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
WATER/WASTEWATER COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING
Wednesday, November 13, 2002**

Members Present:

Juan Mariscal, Narragansett Bay Commission
Howard Cohen, RIEDC
Kathleen Esposito, Brown University
Susanne Greschner, RIPEC
Elizabeth Scott, RIDEM- Water Resources
Thomas Uva, Narragansett Bay Commission

Members Absent:

Lydia Vincent, Atlantic States Rural
Water & Wastewater
Wenley Ferguson, Save the Bay

WRB Staff Present:

Kathleen Crawly
Connie McGreavy

Guests

None

I. CALL TO ORDER:

With a quorum present, Mr. Juan Mariscal called the meeting to order at 1:40 PM.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

As this is the first meeting, there were no minutes for approval.

III. ITEMS FOR ACTION:

A. Documentation of Meetings

Ms. Esposito volunteered to take minutes of the meeting.

B. Building Committee Participation

Juan Mariscal: This subcommittee needs to invite/include people in the wastewater community. We should extend an invitation to pretreatment coordinators and others from the wastewater facility community to this subcommittee. I will invite managers and pretreatment coordinators. We should also include industry and other businesses because, as stakeholders, anything that this subcommittee decides will have a direct effect on their operations.

Elizabeth Scott: We should not limit the invitation to pretreatment coordinators; we should also seek to include facility managers. In addition, when we figure out what we are focusing on we will be better equipped to assess whom to include.

Juan Mariscal: For now we will invite: WWTP (Waste Water Treatment Plant) managers, pretreatment managers, any industry or business that uses water.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

A. Overview of Water Allocation Program

Connie McGreavy: The Water Resources Board has invited stakeholders to participate in the Water Allocation Program. At the end of August, the first brainstorming session took place. At this meeting, it was recognized that the group needed to integrate wastewater into the allocation

program. Eleven subcommittees were formed that were modeled from similar experiences in other states. The major short-term goal is to actually measure or register water use in RI. The findings of the Wastewater group are not as pressing as for some other subcommittees in the near term. The WRB has studies ongoing around the state concerning water use. There are two focus areas: the Blackstone and the Wood-Pawcatuck. These were chosen for their differing characteristics in use and development. There are 29 water suppliers in the state that operate independently. They supply the WRB with detailed information on water use that the subcommittees will use. Providence supplies 60% of RI population with water. About 10% of RI is on private wells from which we need to assess how much water they are using.

Juan Mariscal: First we should discuss how water and wastewater relate. WWTP's have a great impact on the use of water because the more water used, the more water is treated and discharged into the bay. Can we investigate water reuse opportunities at Quonset?

Howard Cohen: RI Economic Development Corp. controls both ends of the pipe for the facilities that are located in Quonset Point. They have pushed smaller customers (i.e. car cleaning operations, etc.) to take advantage of water conservation measures. They encourage water conservation and recycling with use of both incentives and disincentives. Business takes advantage of these due to the cost of sewer connections (estimated @ \$120,000-130,000). The Narragansett Bay Commission should publicize efforts and incentives to businesses, particularly to car washes and the like, since the pay-off is realized in a short amount of time.

Elizabeth Scott: We should try to get all car washes in the state to recycle water.

Thomas Uva: Many already do because of the high costs of sewer.

Elizabeth Scott: It is worthwhile to identify other sectors in which there exists an easy technology to install/retrofit for conservation or recycling that we can target for water use reduction.

Kathleen Crawly: The WRB has looked into these issues on a more micro level scale, for instance alternatives to conventional lawn watering.

Elizabeth Scott: We should also look into the potential of limitations of reuse to golf courses-quantify how far courses are from WWTP's. We should look at the full water cycle (not just the end) to inspect how we manage our resource as a whole. Are any subcommittees looking into storm water? The way we build cities and towns inhibits water infiltration. Can we look at opportunities to enhance infiltration, and thus recharge to groundwater? We should identify how can we "stick a straw" into pipes to siphon off water for irrigation.

Juan Mariscal: The working groups need to ask themselves if water can be allocated into the future. If the answer is no, then we need to look at the costs and benefits of alternatives.

Elizabeth Scott: We have data on water use for each year. But it is necessary to move away from the annual averages towards the discrete instances like in the summer when there is not enough stream flow to preserve ecological health. Concerning farmers, the DEM knows that in summers the streams are below "Aquatic Based Flow" which creates a conflict. When there is drought, farmers need more water. Should this subcommittee look into summer demand?

Kathleen Crawly: The Blackstone and Wood-Pawcatuck are different but have the same issues in the summer. The Blackstone has a power company that needs to supply power when it is hot

and dry which is when stream flow is reduced. On the Wood-Pawcatuck, it becomes environment vs. the farmer—the hotter it is, the bigger the conflict.

Elizabeth Scott: Southern RI has experienced increased residential water use from development and tourism. When there is a water shortage, evapotranspiration increases, yet citizens and farmers still need water, and more of it. However, the water is not available.

Thomas Uva (&Howard Cohen): Can the WRB mandate recycling of water? We need to stop using of potable water in cooling operations that is dumped into the rivers. I would encourage regulation that mandates these conservation technologies. There should be a pamphlet to educate businesses about tax credits to purchase chillers. Without informing consultants and suppliers about these initiatives and incentives, companies will not take advantage of these opportunities. In RI, no one enforces the state plumbing and mechanical codes, which is one reason that companies are not moving. In MA, they enforce these regulations locally. We need to look at outside water use by residences. This is where the water use is in the summer. For instance, the State House uses one-pass potable water for air conditioning. The RIEDC has consumption-based fees, a “pay as you spray” system. Who will be in charge of enforcing new regulations on water use?

Juan Mariscal: We must realize that water suppliers are in the business of selling water, so why would they encourage conservation? The rates have not driven innovation (i.e. in cooling systems, reuse, etc.) because they are not high enough to initiate change. Rhode Island rates are on the low side.

Connie McGreavy: The Regulated Riparian Model Water Code seeks to tie rate structures and fees together. This is a huge and complicated task.

Juan Mariscal: I think that this subcommittee should focus on reuse and how much conservation is possible via incentives. We should also identify demonstration type projects for the WRB.

Elizabeth Scott: The DEM has conducted a water audit of the State House. \$15,000 from grants was spent to look into separating wastewater and storm water. We could look into using sludge for compost in state parks and on highway medians. Instead of replumbing buildings, we might look into transporting the wastewater in tank trucks. I would add that we should look into the lack of enforcement of the plumbing code in industry and residences (especially in South County). The DEM has had years of conversation concerning the State House. About the State House audit, its air conditioning system is the worst; it is a once through system. We should look at innovative, closed loop technologies and then bring these examples, perhaps in the form of a brochure, to RIEDC for distribution to prospective businesses.

Juan Mariscal: This subcommittee has a six-month period during which it should focus on five areas:

1. Wastewater reuse
2. Educational programs
3. Replumbing & other possibilities for increased water efficiency
4. Demonstration projects
5. Conservation from financial incentives (identify the carrots and the sticks)

December 19, 2002 is the meeting of all subcommittees. January 22, 2003 will be the next Wastewater subcommittee meeting to be held at 1:00 at the Narragansett Bay Commission, One Service Road.

Kathleen Crawly: Let's compile a fact sheet on conservation/reuse success stories before the January meeting...something like a top ten list. In addition, can we get a copy of the State House audit?

Connie McGreavy: The education subcommittee is hoping for a press release. Providence Business News may help circulate a short one-pager on water allocation to RI businesses. We should also contact someone at URI who we could talk with from the URI Water Resources Center.

B. Purpose of Committee

Juan Mariscal: The Water Resources Board is charged to define water allocation in RI. Based on the findings of the 11 subcommittees, the Board will implement suggestions in allocating the state's water. When wastewater is introduced to issues of fresh water, the picture changes. This picture is of the two ends of the pipe. I found a report from 1984 on water demand management, so this has been an idea for a long time now. We need to decide what affects the quantity of water, and then focus on these hypotheses.

C. Developing of Mission, Goals and Objectives

Juan Mariscal: Maximizing the efficiency of water use, and wastewater and storm water reuse to meet present and future needs. Juan Mariscal and Elizabeth Scott will work on finalizing the mission statement before the next subcommittee meeting.

D. Report to Water Allocation Program Advisory Committee

Connie McGreavy: The heads of the subcommittees will meet on Friday, November 19, 2002. Juan Mariscal will represent the group and will give a five-minute review of the proceedings and proposed objectives from this Wastewater subcommittee. These meetings will occur about once each month. The packet that was handed out will show the group how and when to report.

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

None

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion by Mr. Juan Mariscal, seconded by Ms. Elizabeth Scott, the meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Juan Mariscal
Narragansett Bay Commission

Kathleen Esposito
Brown University